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Recollections of 1910-12.

(1) I must begin in the Spring of 1910. My father wanted me to follow my brother's footsteps & enter Saltley College, Birmingham. But I had heard of this new College in Leeds & made up my mind to apply. I thought my father would stop me, as the fees were double that of Saltley. However, he backed me, bless him.

I applied & was called to Interview in Leeds Town Hall.

This story may be a bit far fetched but it is absolutely true. I had never been away from home before, so you can imagine my feelings.

I was called into the Interview Room & sat before Mr. Parsons & his Secretary.

He had a good look at me, shuffled amongst papers, & then asked just one question — Can you play any games? That was all & I was able to respond by telling him I had gained my cricket colours at my Rugby Grammar School.

(2) So I entered, in September 1910, a College in the heart of Yorkshire Cricket. I am more than grateful for the tradition which was building up with regards to the

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first night at Backingham House.

A social gathering in our Lounge. All new students had to contribute something to the entertainment - no excuses whatever. What was I to do? Fortunately I had a musical background - piano. So, looking through the Student's National Song Book, I chose the simplest song. - 'Ye Banks & Braes', & when my turn came, sat down at the piano & sang the song. To my surprise (and I think everybody else's). I discovered I had a pleasing tenor voice (sorry - voice). & that put me in the musical events for the next two years. and, later, followed me wherever I went - even during the '14-18. war.

So you can now see I am grateful to heads for bringing that out of me.

One contribution stays with me to this day & I am often quoting it.

One student got up & just said this -
'When I was young & in my prime,
I could eat a bun at any time,
But now I'm getting old & grey,
I could only eat but one a day?'

(3) Mr. Parson's talk to few Extracts.

This I shall always remember for 3 things.

As we were all put on our knees.

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(3) cont. Being an undenominational College there was no compulsion to attend a place of worship on Sundays. However he put us on our honours to attend at least once on a Sunday.

To my knowledge this honour was generally accepted.

(2). He told us that on no account would he tolerate swearing, but he did let us use one word - a good old English damn when the necessity arose.

(3). Although a ~~str~~ mixed College, on no account were we to associate either with a College girl - or one outside.

The penalty for this would be severe.

One of my yess did get caught. I was sent down for a week - if caught again expulsion.

There was little socialising with College girls. We met, of course, on way to lectures, or at a concert, but I never remember a dance being held. Maybe that was because of the hostel system.

(4) You ask about hostel life.
We were quite a happy family. In my case we were kindly supervised by Mr. Harrison.

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4 (cont.) He ruled us gently & sympathetically. Mr. Kent was his second in Command. Both were killed in the 14-18 war.

One of the Seniors was appointed as a Senior Prefect. It was his task to see we kept the few rules of the house, reporting to Mr. Harris in any defaulters.

He also presided at our Study Sessions.

These were held every evening (with the exception of Saturday & Sunday). This study period was from 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Dinner followed, and just a short period until lights were out in our dormitory at 10-15.

Meals were 'smashing'. It was well known that the Principal believed in feeding us well. We had an excellent matron & a marvellous cook. The result was that it was 'home from home' feeding - perhaps I could say - even better. Extra helpings were there, if wanted.

I think our Cook's speciality went to - porridge, ginger cake & ginger pudding. Of course the ginger cake was the special Yorkshire kind - Parkin. This was provided in plenty on my birthday, Nov. 5th. Yes, we were more than well fed.

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Each Saturday & Sunday we were allowed out till 9-30.

We had to get special permission for a letter return - mainly to attend a theatre or a concert in the City.

How the TV series 'Good Old Days' brought memory to work. & the great, old time comedians we saw on that theatre.

Just one hostel tradition was building up. That was on Halloween. After 10-15. we all covered ourselves with a white bed sheet. - took out 'garry' & placed a ~~white~~ lighted candle in it, & then paraded round the landsip. I shall never forget Mr. Kerr's face when he met us!

A second custom was - no bed at all the last night we were in College, generally spent walking about the grounds.

Of course we sang the College Song on many occasions - particularly on a birthday of a student. Is Yip-i-due, I, die, still the College Anthem?

(6) Leisure Time.

Normal routine followed these lines:-
Lectures in the morning.

Afternoons mostly free, and most of us took to games, football, hockey or Harriers.

If you were a member of the Harriers, you

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8 (cont) were allowed out after study for a training spin along the Heedingley lanes, + come into supper after.

Two fixtures were held - 1st, Seniors v Juniors
After this race, the team was selected to Run against York Training College. - the venue alternates. In my case it was held at York.
The winter games were Association Football + Hockey; played on rather a rough ground.

Criquet: There was great competition here. Most of the 1st XI were Yorkshire lads. + had a Warwickshire man go into the XI, I do not know. I was selected as a bowler, but was never called on once.

I think this must be a College record for all time we went to play Cleeve. Our openers were both named Smith (at-related), and on a summer's afternoon they put on 303 without being parted. Cleeve were dismissed for under 40.

Our home games were played on the Sacred Heedingley Cricket Ground. When the County side were not using it, at least 3 local clubs could operate at the same time.

Colours were awarded for Football, Hockey + Cricket + Harriers. I was awarded my Hockey + Harriers' Colours.

We enjoyed the many walks out on to moor.

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67 (Con). Mr. Parsons, a noted mountaineer, took us on an excursion to Eagleboro.

It was while climbing this that he made us stop frequently & turn round & admire the views behind us.

His theory was, that so few people turned round, consequently missing many superb views.

(6) Dress. I think the group photographs I enclose, will adequately describe our dress at that time. Sombre ready made mostly. Stiff colours were the fashion then, with the odd 'butterfly' thrown in for state occasions. Boots - not shoes.

Head dress - College Caps, to attend lectures. Straw hats with College band for summer. Sunday best - Bowler Hat.

Nowadays, of course, it is generally 'no hat', this custom came into force after the 14-18 war. a spell of tin-helmets, Sun Helmets out East, I think was mostly responsible for this fashion coming into use.

(9) School Practice.

Three stages. 1st Year. mainly Observations
2nd Year. A week's school practice in one of the local Schools.

Derry this year student gave a lesson. The subject being chosen by the Tutor or Charge. In my case. English. - re selected poem.

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This was observed by fellow students & the Tutor. At the end a general criticism "Rattle an' Ordeal".

Finally, came the Final Examination for the Certificate. I have mine still & its number is 12/709. with a Distinction in Theory of Music.

I had no difficulty in finding a teaching post. In fact it was offered to me. - in Luton, Warwickshire.

It was most unfortunate that the 1914-18 war interrupted my teaching career so soon after leaving College. I volunteered in early Sept./14. & eventually saw service in the 2nd Landing at Gallipoli, then to Salonica & finishing in Palestine.

The fitness I built up at Leeds stood me in good stead, I am sure. I went through all those experiences without an illness or a scratch.

1919 February of this year saw my return to teaching. It was a hard task, for 4½ yrs absence had made many teachers forget all about their training.

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1919
(cont.)

However, it all came back, my career was a humble one. In 1927 I obtained my 1st Headship in a Village in Hertfordshire. In 1933 I moved to a large Village School where I remained until I retired in 1950. But, here again, teaching was sadly interrupted by the 39/45 war.

This experience as a Village Schoolmaster during that War is a story in itself.

I still maintain that it was a great pity that the Education authority did not send us back to College in 1919 for a Refresher.

I sincerely hope you can pick out some recollections which will be of use to you. To me ~~and~~ T.C. was a very happy place and I am proud that I am still a Wise Old Owl?

Thomas Hallowell

Please forgive any errors.
+ I hope you can read the writing

February 1986